

To Live Forever:

Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum

Frist Center for the Visual Arts
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Mummy Mask of a Man, early 1st century CE, Stucco, gilded and painted, The Brooklyn Museum

Special Exhibition Teacher Guide courtesy of:



PHILBROOK MUSEUM OF ART

To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum

Contents

Exhibition Overview	3
Understanding Egyptian Daily Life	3
The Pharaoh	3
The Government	4
Living with the Land	4
Home and Family	5
Personal Care	7
Education and Learning a Craft	9
Artists	9
Hieroglyphs and Other Egyptian Scripts	11
Hieroglyphic Alphabet.....	12
Understanding the Afterlife	12
Body and Spirit After Death	12
Mummification	13
The Elite Funeral	14
The Netherworld	16
Multi-Deity Belief System	19
Meet the Gods	19
Dynastic Chronology	25
Glossary	28
Exhibition Themes and Key Images	30

Helpful references:

Exhibition Catalogue: Bleiberg, Edward and Kathlyn M. Cooney. *To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum*. Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn Museum, 2008.

Exhibition website at the Indianapolis Museum of Art:
www.imamuseum.org/exhibitions/toliveforever/

Exhibition Overview

To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum

Belief in the afterlife and belief that death was an enemy that could be vanquished was fundamental to the ancient Egyptians. As part of their quest to defeat death, Egyptians mummified their dead and performed a variety of elaborate rituals in the tomb before, during, and after burial to assist the deceased in their journey through the netherworld.

The Egyptians also developed a rich and complex vision of what they would find in this next world. Both the wealthy and the poor participated in these beliefs and practices, and the poor strove to imitate the rich in their own more humble rituals, offerings, and grave goods in hopes of ensuring themselves a better place and fate in the afterlife.

Presenting over a hundred objects from the Brooklyn Museum's world-renowned collections of ancient Egyptian art – including mummies, coffins, stone sculpture, gold jewelry, precious amulets, and sacred vessels – *To Live Forever* is a special and rare opportunity to view precious treasures from one of history's most intriguing civilizations, inviting all to explore the ways in which the Egyptians approached the most momentous and mysterious of events, death.

For this exhibition, each gallery has a distinct theme. The pieces tell a story, and all relate to areas of belief of the afterlife for ancient Egyptians.

Understanding Egyptian Daily Life

The Pharaoh

Pharaoh means "Great House" or king's palace and has come to be used as the title given to the supreme rulers of ancient Egypt. The people of Egypt considered the pharaoh to be a half-man, half-god. Essentially, the pharaoh "owned" all of Egypt – the natural resources, the people, even the Nile River itself. The pharaoh's power was bestowed from the gods directly to him, and was never to be countermanded or questioned.

The citizens believed in the absolute power of the pharaoh and gave their resources to the pharaoh freely. Many farmers gave portions of their crops, workers donated their labor, and artists created art for the pharaoh. This made the pharaoh an extremely wealthy person, and he was held in the highest regard.

Grain was given as a payment – similar to the taxes we pay today. The government, carefully directed by the pharaoh, built storehouses to hold the grain. During times of severe drought, the pharaoh would distribute the grain to the hungry Egyptians. The king gave out food rations at all times of the year.

The pharaoh's most important role was to serve as a lawmaker and warrior. The pharaoh chose **viziers**, or prime ministers, to help him. These advisors were the pharaoh's closest and most trusted confidantes, giving advice on matters of government, religion, and daily life.

Pharaohs wore ceremonial clothing and wigs, beards, and tails. The false beards were usually blue, since

blue hair was attributed to deities. The tail was intended to remind the people that the pharaoh had magical, animal powers. The pharaoh also carried a **crook**, or shepherd's staff, and a **flail**. The crook represented a shepherd's protection, and the flail was a probably a fly-whisk, which kept pests away and would therefore symbolize the pharaoh's protection of Egypt from invading armies or evil spirits. He wore a crowns for ceremonies (including the **White Crown of Upper Egypt** and **Red Crown of Lower Egypt**) and a headdress, called a **Nemes**, as everyday wear.

The pharaoh was usually succeeded by his oldest son. The son would have been trained throughout his life to take over the role of pharaoh after his father's death. Sometimes sibling rivalries and secret plots caused a change in this succession. Sons usually married their sister or half-sister to centralize power and draw upon the royal lineage, since the pharaohs were seen as descendents of the gods.

Pharaohs were not always men – there were very noteworthy women pharaohs, including Hatshepsut (c. 1508-1458 BCE). They took on the same symbolic accoutrements as male pharaohs, including the headdress, crowns, beard, and tail.

The Government

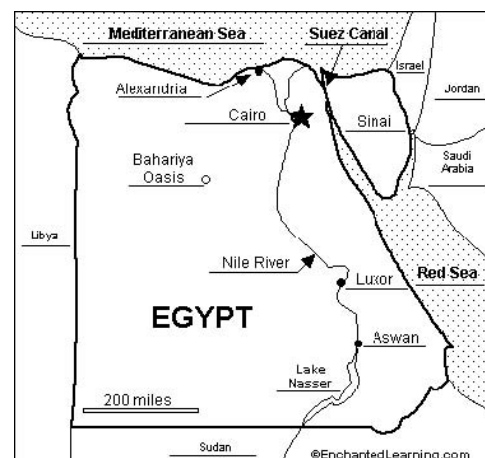
Egypt was not just a place ruled by a pharaoh. It was also a theocracy – a government controlled by the religious rulers as well as political ones. All of the government officials were appointed by the pharaoh, and the official in the highest position was the vizier, who was almost always also a priest.

At the next level of government, below pharaoh and vizier, were the chief treasurer, the tax collector, the minister of public works, and the army commanders. These officials reported directly to the pharaoh and oversaw huge groups of government workers.

The land was divided into **nomes**, or provinces, and each nome had a governor. Each nome was responsible for paying taxes to the pharaoh, in both goods and labor. Grain and crafted goods were given as taxes, but if an Egyptian had neither available, they gave their time – forced periods of labor, known as a **corvée**, or labor tax.

Centrally, the different offices of the government kept records of various activities, including crops, trade, and market activities. Another division trained troops and carried on wars. Customs officers kept track of who came in and out of the country. The political structure of ancient Egyptian civilization was the forerunner of many current ruling governments today.

Living With the Land



Greek historian Herodotus (c.484-420 BCE) called Egypt “the Gift of the Nile.” The river is over 4,000 miles (6,400 km) long, beginning far to the south of Egypt and ending in a large delta in the northern part of Egypt. The Nile was at the center of life for ancient Egyptians. The seasons were determined by its regular flooding, and the river provided the main method of transportation.

The ancient Egyptians divided Egypt two ways – both indicative of the Nile River’s impact on the land. First, Egyptians divided the Nile and their land into northern and southern regions. The regions were determined according to the direction that the Nile flows, which is from the South toward the Mediterranean Sea in the North. **Upper Egypt** is the southern section of Egypt approximately from Aswan to Memphis. **Lower Egypt** is the northern delta region of Egypt that stretches approximately from Memphis to the Mediterranean Sea.

Also, Egyptians saw their land as consisting of the **black land** or *kemet* and the **red land** or *deshret*. The black land was the fertile land along the banks of the Nile. The ancient Egyptians used this land for growing their crops. This was the only land in ancient Egypt that could be farmed because a layer of rich, black silt was deposited every year after the Nile flooded. Farmers followed modern convention of growing a particular kind of food and trading in the market for other foods they did not grow themselves.

The red land was the barren desert that protected Egypt on two sides. These deserts separated ancient Egypt from neighboring countries and invading armies. They also provided the ancient Egyptians with a source for precious metals and semi-precious stones.

The red land provided a source of nourishment other than crops – hunting. This was a sport enjoyed by peasants and noblemen alike. In the desert, the men dug camouflaged ditches and used bows, arrows, boomerangs, daggers, and spears to catch prey, including lions, antelope and gazelle. The weapons were often made of wood, bronze and copper.

Closer to the marshes, fishermen also found nourishment. They used spears and traps to catch water animals and eventually made nets to catch eel, mullet, carp, perch, and catfish.

Between the red and black land, shepherds lived in the pastures, on the borders of the marshes. Often, they would bring milk and beef to market, to trade with the fishermen, farmers, and desert hunters.

Home and Family

Ancient Egyptian society was divided into four classes:

Upper Class – government officials, nobles, priests, and family of the pharaoh

Middle Class – scribes, skilled craftsmen, teachers, artists, and soldiers

Lower Class – peasants, farmers, laborers, and servants

Slave Class – slaves who were mostly captured foreigners

Dwellings: The home was at the center of all Egyptian life. For all classes, the houses were made of straw and mud, which were formed into bricks and set to cure in the sun. Floors had an early version of carpeting – reeds woven into mats. Palms often provided support for the ceilings.

Some middle class homes were multi-storied to capitalize on limited ground space. Most structures were square in shape and had a variety of rooms similar to our modern houses – a living room, a

bedroom, and a backyard where the kitchen would have been. Some homes had a grinding floor, used to grind grain for beer or bread. Cellars were common for storage and were located beneath the home. Roofs were often used as terraces and became another living space.



Standing Figure of Bes; 664-30 BCE; Gold; Brooklyn Museum

For all classes, decoration was important inside the home. Shelves built into the walls held statues of the gods and goddesses. These statues would change depending on the blessings the family needed at that time. If you were hoping to expand your family and protect your home, a statue of Bes would be appropriate (Pictured: *Standing Figure of Bes*). When mourning the loss of a family member, Osiris might be prominently displayed and an integral part of household worship. Similar to today, people of religious belief would surround themselves with reminders of those who protect them in the form of sculpture or paintings.

The upper class had sprawling estates in the country or on the edges of town, featuring high ceilings and pillars and brightly colored wall paintings. Gardens, pools, and lush foliage were common, and lotus blossoms were the flower of choice. Servants would keep the pools stocked with fish and wildlife from the Nile. A shrine for worship, stables, servant's quarters, and storage houses for grain and food were included in the estate.

An upper class home would include a type of bathing room, which would be sunken with a slab of stone in the corner where servants would pour water over the family member so that they could cleanse their bodies.

Unlike the lower-class sleeping rooms, which had only reed mats and linen sheets for a bed, an upper-class bedroom would have a bed made from fine wood and inlaid with precious metals and ivory. Mattresses were covered in linen and animal skins, and pillows were not used. Instead, a curved headrest of wood, bone, or stone was used (Pictured: *Headrest with Two Images of the God Bes*). These headrests continue to be used in parts of Africa.



Headrest with Two Images of the God Bes; ca. 1539-1190 BCE; Wood; Brooklyn Museum

Family Unit:

Most Egyptian families were large with seven children on average. The role of each child was largely determined by gender. The boys would work in the farm, in the fields, or at the craft that their father practiced, while the girls stayed in the home with mother, learning how to keep house and maintain family life until the age of 14, when they would marry.

A combination of arranged marriages and marriage for love was common. There was no legal ceremony of marriage; two people simply set up a common home and declared themselves united. A woman would usually be given a dowry, and this would remain her property through the entire marriage.

Egyptian women were treated with great respect. Although they were not allowed to hold government office, they could hold jobs at court and be priestesses. There were also many skilled craftswomen. Women could own businesses, run farms, and help their husbands. They had full legal rights and control over their property. They could divorce and remarry if they wished.

Egyptian children played with many toys that resemble toys throughout the centuries. Dolls, balls, tops, animal toys, and board games were popular, especially among the middle class. Dolls were made of cloth and clay, and animal toys were made of stone or clay. Balls were made by wrapping linen rags

around each other, tightly for smaller versions, and looser for softer, larger balls. Toddlers used pull-toys similar to the toys that children play with today.

Most families had pets, and cats were a favorite. Not only did the cat eat unwanted vermin, but the cat goddess, **Bastet**, was a protector of the home. Other pets included monkeys, geese, goats, and birds. The upper class had dogs as pets, which they used for hunting. Egyptian families often mourned the loss of a beloved pet the same way we do today, and many owners mummified or buried their pets, saving the collar. When the owner died, they were buried with the collar of their beloved pet, in the hopes that the pet would be reunited with its master in the afterlife. Pets were as much a part of the ancient Egyptian family as they are the modern family.

While there were slaves in ancient Egypt, the stories handed down about the number and treatment of the Egyptian slaves is probably overblown. Slaves had certain rights and could own property. Favored household slaves could do well and gain their freedom.

Food: Unlike our modern custom of eating three meals a day, Egyptians ate two meals – the first at dawn and the second at dusk.

The most common food and drink for all classes were bread and beer, which were made from the two most common crops – wheat and barley. Records have been found mentioning seventeen kinds of beer and over fifty types of bread, as well as pastries and cakes. Bread was often baked in a cone-shaped mold and often sweetened with honey and fruit. The finest loaves of bread were ground with sand, which could heavily abrade the Egyptians' teeth. Beer was thick, nutritious, and less alcoholic than beer today. Sometimes the Egyptians flavored their beer with spices, honey and dates.

Other staples of the Egyptian diet include cereals, vegetables, and fruits. Among these were barley, wheat, lentils, cucumbers, beans, onions, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, and coconuts. Egyptians used herbs like dill, mint, cumin and parsley in their cooking, and favored the strong flavors of onions and garlic, believing they were good for the health. Meat was expensive and rarely eaten except at feasts. People might hunt or fish for meats, or keep a few goats, pigs or poultry. Cattle was the most valuable domesticated animal, and wealthier families might keep a small herd for their use.

At home, food was served in pottery dishes and eaten with fingers. Wealthy families would have a greater variety of dishes for their meals and would dine on metal plates made of bronze, silver or gold.

Personal Care

Clothing: Clothing was very simple and often made of linen, which comes from the flax that grew plentiful in Egyptian fields. The wealthy wore finely woven cloth, while the field workers and farmers wore much thicker, more durable versions of linen. Clothing was light-weight and light-colored to accommodate the hot climate of Egypt.

Most male peasants wore only a loincloth, since they worked in the sun and minimal clothing kept them cooler. Upper class men wore skirts, kilts and many accessories. Women wore simple, tight-fitting dresses that were held together at the shoulders by linen straps. Upper-class ladies wore shawls, headdresses of flowers, and beaded collar necklaces. Most children did not wear clothing until they were approximately ten years old. On their feet, Egyptians preferred to wear sandals made from reeds or leather.

Jewelry: Adornment was important for individuals who could afford to own jewelry. A common theme among Egyptian jewelry was the **scarab beetle**, a symbol of resurrection or life after death. Amulets were made resembling scarab beetles (See beetle pictured to right) and placed on mummies in their tombs.



Pear-Shaped Kohl Pot; ca. 1938-1630 BCE; Alabaster; Brooklyn Museum

Men and women alike wore earrings, bracelets, rings, necklaces and collar-like jeweled pieces. Most jewelry was made from gold mined in the nearby desert. Precious stones including carnelian, feldspar, and amethyst were commonly used in jewelry, as were turquoise and lapis lazuli.

Cosmetics: The use of makeup and cosmetics were a functional and important part of Egyptian life for both men and women of all classes. Eye makeup, or **kohl**, was one of the most significant facial ornamentations. Used to line and shadow the eyelids, tint the eyelashes and highlight the brows, kohl was not only applied

for matters of appearance, but also for its curative and protective qualities. Kohl protected the eyes from the glare of the intense sun, kept insects away from the eyes, and in some cases had mild disinfectant properties. Egyptians used both green malachite powder made of copper carbonate and black galena powder from lead sulfide as eye makeup.

Many Egyptians believed that makeup had magical and healing power, and some was so expensive that only the wealthy could wear it. Creams and oils were created and kept in small pots and used often (Pictured: *Pear-Shaped Kohl Pot*). Makeup trays, palettes, and applicators were carved from stone, ivory, wood, and clay, and were often found in even the lower class households. Makeup palettes of the wealthy class were embellished with animals, symbols, and goddesses for protection and safety (Pictured: *Palette with Two Stylized Bird Heads*).



Palette with Two Stylized Bird Heads; ca. 3500-3100 BCE; Slate or schist; Brooklyn Museum

Hair care: Good hair care and a fashionable style were important to men, women and children. Children had shaved heads, except for a lock of hair above one ear that was sometimes braided.

Girls, who remained mostly in the home, wore their hair long in braids or pigtails. Grown women wore their hair loose and braided, and often had servants curl and style their hair for them (Pictured: *Sunk Relief of Queen Neferu*).

Most of the upper class wore wigs. A cone of fragrant oils was often set on the top of the wig for festive occasions. As the event progressed, the cone would melt, trickle down over the body, giving a glistening, rich glow to the body and exuding a lovely, perfumed scent.



Sunk Relief of Queen Neferu; ca. 2008-1957 BCE; Limestone, painted; Brooklyn Museum

Education and Learning a Craft

Boys were the primary recipients of formal education at a school, which was quite expensive. Attendance from the age of five until their teenage years was common. Those who could not attend school for academic pursuits learned a skill or craft at the hands of their father or a master craftsman.

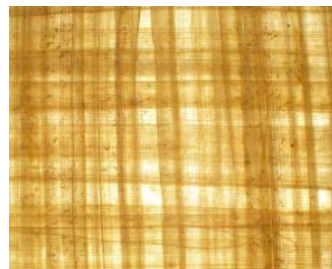
Schools: Most schools were attached to a governing body – a temple or office of the government. Children were taught by the priests and learned to write in Egyptian script. They would practice on broken pieces of pottery or wood, as papyrus would have been too expensive to practice **hieroglyphs**. The more advanced students also studied mathematics, history, geography, astronomy, and law. Physical fitness and impeccable manners were also taught and expected to be mastered.

Ceramics: Potters created bowls, platters, jugs, jars, and small cosmetic pots. Vessels were often made of clay and were thrown on a wheel similar to modern pottery wheels.

Basketry: Weavers created baskets out of marsh stalks. Papyrus reeds made the best baskets; usually the outer rind of the plant was used. Other woven materials included ropes, clothes, bedding, floor mats, sandals and combs.

Carpentry: Woodworkers would utilize cedar, cypress, juniper, and bamboo to build a wide variety of objects. Furniture, boats, and coffins were in high demand. Carpenters knew how to inlay stones and ivory into chests and caskets. Stronger woods would be imported from Syria and Lebanon for the furniture of the upper class, especially for their living rooms, bedrooms, and dining areas.

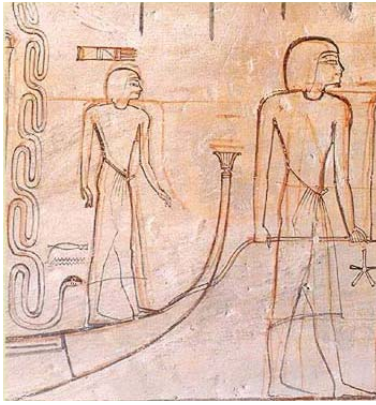
Paper Making: Skilled laborers were charged with transforming **papyrus** stems into flat paper. The stems were cut lengthwise into very narrow strips, and then flattened with a wooden mallet. The strips were then laid overlapping side-by-side horizontally. A second layer would be added vertically. Then, a layer of linen was laid over the papyrus strips, and all pieces were pounded together. At this point, the sap from inside the papyrus stalks would seep out, creating a glue to bind all the strips together. After curing in the sun, the pieces would be glued to other sheets with resin, and a long sheet of papyrus could be rolled into a scroll (See the two images below: papyrus formed into scrolls, and a close view of the fibers of a papyrus). The word paper is derived from “papyrus.”



Artists

The creation of all art in Ancient Egypt had a purpose. Their level of training and professionalism was unparalleled, and they used the latest technology available. Art for tombs and temples was meant to be eternal – supporting the Egyptians’ belief in the afterlife. Therefore, many of the artistic conventions did not alter dramatically over the 3,000 years of Egyptian civilization.

Drawing: In completing a painting in a tomb, the first step would be the creation of outlines, which were drawn by outline scribes with the assistance of a grid system to ensure that their drawings’



Drawing from the Tomb of Horemheb;
Valley of the Kings, Egypt; not in exhibition

proportions were accurate. After the outline was completed, painters would add color to the forms. Finally, the outline scribes would come back in, reline the paintings with outlines, and complete any other finishing touches. These sketches were an effective way of ensuring that all requirements for tomb art were met, consistently, throughout all rooms of the structure. Occasionally, the final stages of painting were not completed for one reason or another, but the initial drawing by the outline scribe would remain a symbol for what had been intended. *(Pictured: a drawing from the Tomb of Horemheb, Valley of the Kings, Egypt – not in exhibition)*

In Egyptian art, there were specific rules for representing the human figure. The head was always drawn in profile, showing one eye and eyebrow, half a mouth, and the nose. Shoulders were always shown full width, but the remaining torso was in profile. Two legs were shown, usually slightly apart in a static upside-down “v.” The purpose of the tomb paintings was to provide information – in this case, to record directions for the journey to the afterlife in assistance to the deceased. Scale also played an important part – the larger a figure was painted, the more important he was in real life.

Sculpture: Sculptors were integral in Egyptian society and could work deftly in copper and bronze. They were also adept in cutting stone for reliefs. Basic tools were often crafted of wood, flint, stone, copper and bronze. Many of the sculptures were of massive size, representing gods, goddesses, and pharaohs.

Painting: Painters were responsible for transforming the insides of tombs, temples and homes. Often, statues were also painted after carving.

The paints themselves were created from natural pigments, made mostly of ground minerals mixed with vegetable gums and formed into cakes of paint. Another medium would have been used to apply the paint, something similar to egg, sizing, or gum. The primary colors of Egyptian painting are easily identified as follows:

Black – made from carbon, soot, or burned bones

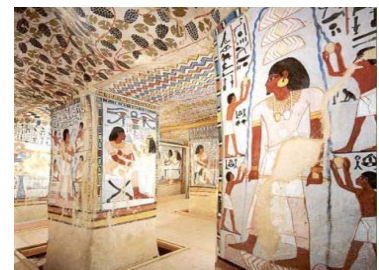
White – created from calcium sulphate or chalk

Blue – formed from a compound of silica, calcium and copper

Yellow – usually yellow ochre, but sometimes made of orpiment

Green – made of mostly copper ore or malachite

Red – crafted from oxides of iron and red ochre



Tomb of Sennefer; West Bank at Luxor, Egypt;
not in exhibition

Painters could blend these pigments to create subtle colors, earth tones, tints and shades. They did not paint into wet plaster or stone, so these tomb paintings are not frescoes. Most similar to modern tempera or gouache paint, these thick, opaque, powdery paints would be lightfast and not as fugitive as thinner, oil-based paints. Varnishes and natural resin protective layers were applied after painting, especially on wood. *(Pictured: The Private Tomb of Sennefer, The West Bank at Luxor – not in exhibition)*

Hieroglyphs and Other Egyptian Scripts

The Egyptians believed that it was important to record and communicate information about religion and government. Thus, they invented written scripts that could be used to record this information. The most famous of all ancient Egyptian scripts is called **hieroglyphic writing**. However, throughout 3,000 years of ancient Egyptian civilization, at least 3 other scripts were used for different purposes.

The forms of written ancient Egyptian:

Hieroglyphs – “sacred carvings;” formal, religious and governmental inscriptions on monuments. Uses approximately 700 individual symbols. In general, only the pharaoh, priests and scribes could read and write hieroglyphs. Note: Transliterating hieroglyphs results in many different spellings – i.e. Re and Ra.

Hieratic – a shorthand or “cursive” form of hieroglyphs, used mostly for religious purposes. Allowed scribes to write quickly by hand without having to form each hieroglyph.

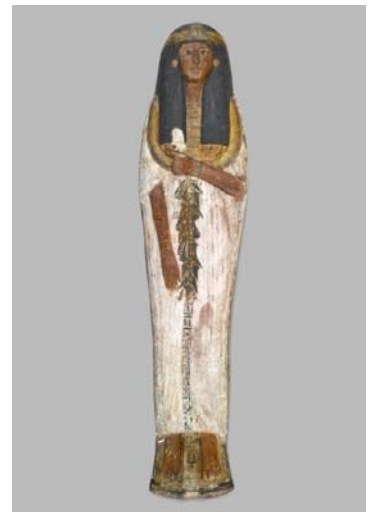
Demotic – derived from hieratic. Even more cursive than hieratic. Used in secular and everyday writing.

Coptic – a later development. Egyptian written with the Greek alphabet. Still used in the Coptic Orthodox Christian churches.

When picture writing first began, the pictures represented the actual object they depicted. These were called **pictograms**. For example, a picture of a sun within a pictogram text signified that the sun itself was referenced. Later, pictures came to represent ideas, so that if you saw a sun in a text, it might symbolize daytime, warmth, or light. These were known as **ideograms**. Finally, the pictures began to represent not only the appearance of an object, but also the sound of the word. For example, “sun” might also mean “son” or be part of the word “Sunday.”

Reading hieroglyphs can be complicated and difficult. In fact, until the nineteenth century the ability to read and write in hieroglyphs had been lost, and the innumerable texts and inscriptions on Egyptian monuments and papyri were impenetrable. For instance, actual Egyptian hieroglyphs contain no vowels, and the 700 individual hieroglyphic symbols may be used to stand for a sound, an idea or an actual object depending on context. According to the direction that the animal hieroglyphs face, hieroglyphs can be read left to right, right to left, or top to bottom.

































In 1799, however, a breakthrough in deciphering hieroglyphics occurred. A large slab of stone, carved in 196 BCE, was found by French soldiers in the foundations of a fort near the Egyptian city of Rashid (Rosetta) in the Nile Delta. This remarkable discovery – the **Rosetta Stone** – was divided into three texts written in three languages – Greek, Demotic and Hieroglyphs. Egyptian scholars posited that the three writings were translations – that all three, in different scripts, gave the same information. In 1822, French linguist Jean-François Champollion deciphered the demotic and hieroglyphic scripts. Champollion could read both Greek and Coptic, which has its roots in demotic – so he was able to use the Greek to decipher both the demotic and the hieroglyphs.



Coffin of the Lady of the House, Weretwahset, Reinscribed for Bensuiwet, Containing Face Mask and Openwork Body Covering; ca. 1292-1190 BCE; Wood, painted and cartonnage; Brooklyn Museum

Hieroglyphic writing was in use until the late 4th Century. It was used extensively with relatively little change in form for some 3,000 years on paper, wood, walls of tombs and temples, sculptures and sarcophagi (Pictured: *Coffin of the Lady of the House Weretwahset, Reinscribed for Bensuiwet, Contains a Mummy Presumably of Bensuiwet*). The script persisted well into the Christian era, with the last known datable hieroglyphic inscription carved on 24th August, 394 CE, on the gate of Hadrian at Philae.

Hieroglyphic Alphabet

A 	H 	N 	U 
B 	I 	O 	V 
C  or 	J 	P 	W 
D 	K 	Q 	X  
E  or  or 		R 	Y  or 
F 	L 	S 	Z 
G 	M 	T 	SH 

Understanding the Afterlife

For Egyptians, death was not the end. It was merely a transitional time from the earthly existence into the Netherworld, where the Egyptians believed they would spend the rest of their eternity. In order to make the journey to the Netherworld safely, and to live the same life there that they lived on earth, very specific ritual processes were set into place.

Body and Spirit After Death

The Western tradition considers the individual to be composed of two parts – a body and a soul. The ancient Egyptians, however, saw the human being as comprised of multiple elements that could work in harmony or could challenge each other.

The **body** is made of the following:

- **Khat** or **Iru** – the living body
- **Sah** – the mummy, or body after death, is a physical container for all of the components of an individual, and its preservation and protection is therefore of central importance
- **Heart** – controls thought and emotion, but has an independent existence after death
- **Shadow** – seen as part of the physical body, and is present when the deceased stands before Osiris, the god of the underworld, for judgment

The **spirit** is made of the following:

- **Ka** – the individual’s life force or creative and sustaining power of life. It is believed that the god Khnum created both the Ka and the physical body on a potter’s wheel at the birth of each person.
- **Ba** – the individual’s soul or personality, represented as a bird with the face of the deceased. The Ba can speak to the individual while they’re alive on earth and after death. The Ba could move freely after death. If the Ba is not able to return to the tomb, the deceased would no longer be whole.
- **Ren** – the name of the person. The Ren controlled the person’s fate either through its use in magic or through the protection of the god invoked in the name.

In order to live forever, each of these bodily and spiritual components had to be preserved and integrated into an **Akh**, the effective spirit of the person, which could eat, sleep, use weapons, receive protection, and could leave the coffin and move about as needed. All items for a tomb were supplied so the Akh could be unified and strong.

Mummification

The process of mummification is a detailed and specific one (Pictured: *Mummy of Demetrios*). The ancient Egyptians believed that to journey to the afterlife, they must have an intact, mummified body. Depending on an Egyptian’s station in society, the mummification process was either elaborate or very simple, but both achieved the primary purpose of removing the organs, drying out the body, and wrapping it for final rest in a tomb. Much of our knowledge of mummification comes from the Greek historian Herodotus, who observed and wrote about the processes during the mid-5th century BCE.



The Mummy of Demetrios; 50-100 CE; Painted cloth, gold, human remains, wood, encaustic, gilding; Brooklyn Museum

If a deceased person was a member of the upper class, the “**Most Perfect**” method would likely be chosen, which would take a total of 70 days:

1. First is **excerebration**, or the removal of the brain from head through the nose using a hook. Egyptians did not see the memory or intelligence of humans as being connected with this organ, and simply discarded it.
2. The skull was rinsed with a solution of liquid drugs to remove all brain residue and kill bacteria.
3. An incision was made along the flank of the body to remove abdominal organs except for the heart. (See below.)
4. The abdominal cavity was rinsed out with palm wine and herbed infusions.
5. The cavity was filled with myrrh, cassia and other herbs.
6. To remove all moisture from the body, it was placed into **natron** (a salt mixture) for 70 days. Any less and there would still be moisture in the body. Any more, it would be too stiff for wrapping.
7. The body is removed from the natron, washed, and wrapped in linen. Amulets are placed between layers of bandages. The wrappings are covered with a gum solution to seal them.
8. The body is returned to the family, ready for burial.

With the choosing of the “Most Perfect” method, the vital organs were removed and prepared for burial in the tomb. Certain organs were treated specifically.

The **heart** remained in the body to testify after death during the judgment ceremony, called the “Weighing of the Heart,” to enter the Netherworld. It was the organ believed to have known all the person’s actions in life – both good and bad. If the dead person’s heart was lighter than a feather, they could move on to the Afterlife. Often, after the heart had been removed and wrapped, it was placed back into the chest cavity with a Scarab Beetle amulet upon it. The amulet had inscriptions on it, instructing the heart not to reveal compromising information about the deceased during the trial.

Other **vital organs** were mummified and placed into **canopic jars** and then placed in the tomb. Each jar represented a god whose job it was to protect a specific organ for the afterlife. The four gods are the **Four Sons of Horus**.

Duamutef – Jackal head; protected the stomach [Pictured: *Canopic Jar and Lid (Depicting a Jackal)*]

Hapi – Baboon head; protected the lungs

Imsety – Man; protected the liver

Qebehsenuef – Falcon head; protected the intestines



Canopic Jar and Lid (Depicting a Jackal); 664-525 BCE or later; Limestone; Brooklyn Museum

For those with less financial resources, an amended version of mummification was available, for those who “**Wish To Avoid Expense.**”

1. To remove the internal organs, but to save money, the body is not opened. Instead, a solution of oil from cedar trees is injected by syringe into the body, which liquefies the internal organs.
2. To remove all moisture from the body, it was now placed into natron (a salt mixture) for 70 days.
3. The body is removed from the natron, and the cedar oil is drained out the rectum.
4. Sometimes the body is wrapped in linen.
5. The body is returned to the family, ready for burial.

The final method, termed the “**Inexpensive Method,**” was most often used for members of the lower class.

1. A cleansing liquid is injected into the body as an enema.
2. The body soaks in natron for 70 days.
3. The body is returned to the family for burial.

The Elite Funeral

Once the body has been suitably prepared, the upper class would have begun an elaborate process of burial. This “proper” burial, called **Qersset Neferet**, was reserved for the middle and upper classes, and had at least seven distinct steps. The journey’s utilitarian function was simple – moving the body to its final resting place – yet there were many rituals performed along the way to assure that the transition to the afterlife would be smooth. The coffin was moved by a boat or a sledge pulled by oxen. The funeral took the body and mourners past a series of many altars to its final resting place (Pictured: *Anthropoid Coffin of the Servant of the Great Place, Teti*).



Anthropoid Coffin of the Servant of the Great Place, Teti; ca. 1339 BCE - 1307 BCE; Wood, painted; Brooklyn Museum

- The process begins as the family transports the corpse from the home to the **Hall of Embalming**. Professional mourners and priests are present to usher in the deceased. A second procession brought a coffin into the hall. The priests would dress as the Souls of Pe, Sais, Hermopolis, or Hutwerihu, the early kings of Egypt, and would wear masks in the form of the falcon-god Horus and the jackal-god Anubis. The actual mummification process, lasting for 70 days (described above), began. Once mummified, the final ritual performed on the body was made in the section of the Hall of Embalming called the Hall of Anubis.
- After being placed in its coffin, the mummy proceeded on the **Journey to Sais**. Professional mourners and priests accompanied the procession, which paused at an altar, or wabet, to make offerings. They continued on to the altar of Sais, where priests would make offerings of food and recite prayers and the coffin would be decorated with jackal skins (a symbol of Anubis), symbols of the long-worshipped goddess Neith (two bows without arrows), and the hieroglyphic symbol for the divine (an ax or flag called *netjer*).
- The next phase, the **Journey to Buto**, is perhaps the most important phase and is the most commonly depicted scene in tomb representations of funerals. The journey began in the river valley and ended in the necropolis in the desert. Two women, impersonating the goddesses Isis and Nephthys, accompanied a priest wearing an Anubis mask and several lector priests, followed by professional mourners, dignitaries, and officials.
- The next phase is known as “Landing at the **Hall of the Muu** of the Double Gate of the Holy District.” This phase, emphasizing the participation of mourning dancers called Muu, is illustrated in many tombs. The priests called for the Muu dancers to join the procession. The Muu wore distinct clothes and crowns, and the dance was a way of welcoming the deceased into the Necropolis.
- The next step would occur only if the deceased was a king. After the reception into the necropolis, the king’s procession would continue with the **Journey to Heliopolis**, where rituals associating the king with the sun god Re would take place.
- At the **Tomb Entrance**, the mummy in its coffin was set upright while a priest held two small containers called nemset-jars. A priest wearing panther skins performed the ritual known as the “**Opening of the Mouth**” with a **Pesesh-kef** (Pictured: *Pesesh-kef*). This ceremony symbolically allowed the mummy to breathe, speak, and reanimate. A separate procession then brought the canopic jars into the tomb entrance.
- The offering rituals at the **False Door** of the tomb occurred next. The false door is where priests and relatives could leave offerings of food and drink for the use of the deceased in the next world. It is a symbolic door and does not open or close. During the offering rituals, the priests gathered the mummy in the coffin and the canopic jars in front of the false door. They brought food to the door that allowed the *ba* and *ka* of the deceased to survive. The furnishings that the deceased would need in the afterlife are also brought into the tomb. Objects included statues, **shabties** (clay figures who will serve and do the work for the deceased), boxes packed with a sistrum (musical instrument), scepters, furniture, jewelry, amulets, weapons, salves, oils, and



Pesesh-kef (Ritual Implement); ca. 3300-3100 BCE; Obsidian; Brooklyn Museum

flowers (Pictured: *Shabties of Muthotep*). Often a cow was slaughtered here as a final offering. The murals on the walls would have assisted in the afterlife, as they would relate how this person lived, worked, and played.

- The coffin was then deposited into the **Burial Chamber** by nine friends or family members of the deceased. Once everyone exited the chamber and it was closed, the priests would perform final protective rites at the entrance, ensuring the safety of the tomb and its contents.



Shabties of Muthotep; ca. 945-712 BCE;
Faience, glazed; Brooklyn Museum

The Netherworld

Now deposited into his or her tomb, the deceased would begin the journey to the **duat**, or final resting place in the Netherworld. Everyone was not guaranteed entry, however. Good, faithful Egyptians would have been preparing for the journey to the Netherworld for many years.

Training: In their earthly existence, the ancient Egyptians would have learned stories of the gods that would prepare them for their final judgment. These stories include:

Osiris and Rebirth

Ancient Egyptian understanding of the need for mummification and the afterlife is reflected in the story of the god Osiris.

Osiris and his wife/sister Isis were Egypt's beloved first rulers. Osiris's jealous brother, Seth, invited the king to a party only to trap him in a special human-form box—an anthropoid coffin—which he had constructed exactly to Osiris's dimensions. Seth threw the box into the Nile, Osiris drowned, and Seth claimed the throne. After a long search, Isis retrieved Osiris's body, she magically revived him for a brief time, and they conceived a child. Osiris died again, and Isis hid his body in the desert. Seth found the body and, enraged, tore it into fourteen pieces. Isis searched and gathered thirteen of the pieces together. The last piece, the phallus, had been eaten by a fish, so Isis fashioned a replacement and bound all of the pieces together for burial. Isis also built temples for him where he could receive food offerings after death, establishing the precursor of the tomb.

Osiris became lord of the afterlife, merciful judge of the dead, and a symbol of rebirth. Isis raised their son Horus, who later defeated his uncle Seth and regained his father's throne as King of Egypt.

Egyptians wanted to follow Osiris upon their death by being reborn into the afterlife. As with Osiris, it became imperative that the body should not decay and that it should survive death intact. The coffin developed to become an anthropoid coffin, the body was made "whole" (a person who had lost a body part, like an eye, finger, or leg was given a replica as a replacement), the body was wrapped in bandages, the individual was ritually mourned, the mummy was given offerings after burial, and the mummy was placed securely in a tomb for eternity.

The Voyage of the God Re

The sun god Re held great importance as a god of the living and the dead – he represents the endless solar cycle of death and rebirth. Early in Egyptian history, the king of Egypt was known as the "Son of Re."

Re took different forms with different names during each part of the day and night. He traveled in a boat across the sky from east to west, and then at night he traveled across the sky in the

underworld from west to east. On earth, Re was Khepri ("one who becomes," the scarab beetle) at sunrise, he was Re ("the sun") at noon, and Atum ("the completed one") at sunset. On the eastern and western horizons he was Re-Hor-Akhty ("Re-Horus-of-the-Horizon"). The god could take many more forms at night in his journey through the underworld, which was rife with struggles and dangers. At the twelfth hour of night, Re becomes Khepri again, and the cycle begins again.

Osiris is King of the Netherworld, Horus is King of Egypt, and Re binds the two realms together. The stories of Osiris and Re, other Egyptian myths, and also a series of magic spells that protected the deceased from danger provided the knowledge an ancient Egyptian needed to enter and enjoy the afterlife.

Book of the Dead and Other Texts

Depending on an Egyptian's station in life, they may have been given texts to study, which would provide them with the knowledge necessary to complete the journey from the living world to the Netherworld successfully. These texts were included in the tombs so that the deceased could easily refer to their magical spells and advice. In the very beginning, the texts were available only to the King, but slowly certain texts were disseminated down through the class system.

Some of these texts include **Coffin Texts** (written on the coffins for reference), ***The Book of the Two Ways***, which recorded the paths and dangers of the path to the Netherworld, ***The Book of the Dead***, and various other books of the Netherworld. If the Egyptian were royalty, they would have access to restricted books, some of which would have been created just for them. These include King Tutankhamun's ***The Enigmatic Book of the Netherworld***, the New Kingdom royal text ***The Book of the Heavenly Cow***, and the Ptolemaic text used by high officials ***The Book of Traversing Eternity***.

Judgment: With this knowledge firmly in hand and reinforced through hieroglyphs on the tomb walls and in accompanying papyri, the deceased would begin the process of Judgment. If the deceased passed through this phase successfully, they would then spend eternity in the *duat*.

Every potential entrant to the Netherworld underwent a final test to determine whether they had lived a life in accordance with the concept of justice or proper order (called *ma'at*). Passing the test allowed the deceased to enter the section of the *duat* reserved for the blessed dead; failure meant either total obliteration or an eternal existence witnessing the underworld struggle of Re and the dragon-like demon Apophis.

The judgment ceremony is called the "**Weighing of the Heart**," and it is described in the *Book of the Dead*. Anubis leads the deceased to stand before the gods, where he or she would recite the text from Chapter 125 of the *Book of the Dead*, recite the **wennofer** (35 statements of how to live a good life), and give declarations of purity. The gods weighed the deceased's heart, the seat of the person's intellect, emotions, and actions on earth, on the scales of **Ma'at**, the goddess of justice and order. If the heart was lighter than a feather, the hieroglyphic symbol for *ma'at*, then the person's actions on earth had been good. If the heart was heavier than a feather, the person's actions had not been just, and the demon goddess Ammit devoured the heart. If the person was declared as having lead a just life, then they were presented to Osiris and allowed to enter the *duat*.

Eternity: If a person passed the "Weighing of the Heart" judgment ceremony, they entered the **duat**, which resembled earth. In the *duat*, everyone had the same position that they held in their earthly life, and they would spent all eternity there, surrounded by the objects in their tomb.

Over time, these tomb objects changed and evolved. In early periods, burial with bowls for food offerings were common, as were statues and jars. Men's tombs held weapons and women's held cosmetic palettes and applicators. In the Early Dynastic period, those offerings expanded to furniture, jewelry, and games. **Stele** stones were also carved as informational markers to describe who had been buried.

Beginning at the end of the Old Kingdom, mummy masks were made out of materials including **cartonnage**, which is constructed of linen soaked in plaster, modeled and painted (Pictured: *Mummy Cartonnage of a Woman*). Also beginning at this time, false doors were included in tombs.

Soon after, **wadjet** eyes began to adorn coffins. The first **canopic jars** are found in the 11th and 12th Dynasties. **Faience** models were the predecessors of **shabties**. During the New Kingdom's 18th Dynasty, we see everyday objects disappearing from the burial furnishings list.

Life size paintings of the person in civilian dress, called **Mummy boards**, were added during the New Kingdom. During Roman rule, a blend of Egyptian and Roman styles began to take over tombs and décor, resulting in portraits of the deceased inside the tombs.



Mummy Cartonnage of a Woman; 1st century CE; Linen, gilded gesso, glass and faience; Brooklyn Museum

Multi-Deity Belief System

The Egyptians had strong religious beliefs, and they believed in many gods. Worshipping more than one god or goddess is referred to as a multi-deity belief system. These multiple gods and goddesses all had specific specialties or areas of protection and power.

There were some gods and goddesses that everyone would worship – figures such as Re, Osiris, and Isis.



Additionally, each city had its own god or goddess. These local gods provided assistance to individuals of the area who made offerings to the god. For example, if you wanted your crops to grow or wanted to heal an illness, you would take food or clothing to the local god's temple. The priest would take the offering and pray in a special language to the gods.


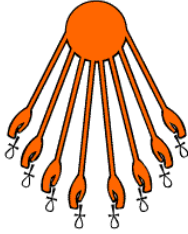




Meet the Gods






Understanding how the major deities relate to one another and what they oversee is helpful in learning more about the Egyptians and their artwork. Keep in mind the following as you explore Egyptian gods and goddesses:



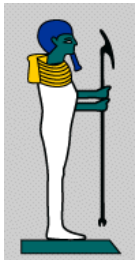
- Spellings may appear slightly different from one source to another
- Over the thousands of years of Egyptian history, gods from one local area might be adopted with slightly different mythology in another area. As they are adopted, they may be conflated with another god.
- Family relationships appear different in many sources
- Some gods and goddesses were brother and sister and were also married
- There are many more gods and goddesses than represented here – keep doing more research to learn them all
- There are many systems of organization that place the gods and goddesses in families, each of them local, and many were in conflict with each other

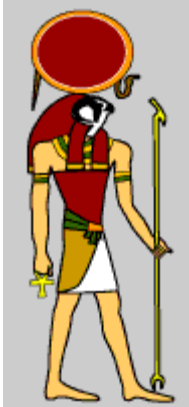




The best way to learn about the gods and goddesses is to identify their attributes and their mythology. To aide in this, an alphabetical listing is included below. It is not a comprehensive list of all gods and goddesses, but it includes gods and goddesses represented in the exhibition or related to the exhibition.





	<p>Ammit</p> <p>Ammit is a goddess with the head of a crocodile, the forequarters of a lion, and the hindquarters of a hippopotamus. During the “Weighing of the Heart” ceremony, Ammit waits to see if the heart of the deceased is heavier than the feather of Ma’at. If it is, she devours the heart, and the deceased person cannot proceed to the Netherworld or <i>duat</i>.</p>
	<p>Amun</p> <p>Amun’s name means “The Hidden One.” Amun was the patron deity of the city of Thebes and was viewed (along with his consort Amunet) as a primordial creation-deity. His sacred animals were the goose and the ram. Up to the Middle Kingdom Amun was merely a local god in Thebes; but when the Thebans had established their sovereignty in Egypt, Amun became a prominent deity, and by Dynasty 18 was termed the King of the Gods. His famous temple, Karnak, is the largest religious structure ever built by man.</p>

	<p>Anubis</p> <p>Depending on the tradition, Anubis was the son of Seth or Osiris. Anubis was depicted as a jackal or jackal-headed man. Probably because of the jackal's tendency to prowl around cemeteries, he became associated with the dead, and by the Old Kingdom, Anubis was worshipped as the inventor of embalming and the embalmer of Osiris. His task became to glorify and preserve all the dead. Anubis also conducted the souls of the dead to their judgment and monitored the Scales of Truth to protect the dead from the second death in the underworld.</p>
	<p>Aten</p> <p>Aten is the sun-disk itself, was recognized first in the Middle Kingdom, and later became an aspect of the sun god. In the reign of Amunhotep IV (Akhenaten), Aten was depicted as a disk with rays, each ray terminating in a human hand and bestowing symbols of "life." Aten was declared the only true deity during this period, but the worship of Amun and the other deities was restored by Amunhotep IV's successors, including Tutankhamun.</p>
	<p>Bastet</p> <p>A cat-goddess worshipped in the Delta city of Bubastis. A protectress of cats and those who cared for cats. As a result, she was an important deity in the home (since cats were prized pets). Bastet was also seen as a sacred animal of the sun god, as she conquered Apophis, a snake demon in the underworld. Bastet is the gentle form of the lion-headed goddess Sekhmet. In later Egyptian mythology, Bastet is also a patroness of luxury and pleasures.</p>
	<p>Bes</p> <p>A deity of either African or Semitic origin; integrated into Egypt society by Dynasty 12. Depicted as a bearded, savage-looking yet comical dwarf, shown full-face in imagery, which is highly unusual by Egyptian artistic conventions. Revered as a deity of household pleasures such as music, good food, and relaxation. Also a protector of pregnant women and children and entertainer of children.</p>
	<p>Four Sons of Horus (Imsety, Hapi, Duamutef, Qebehsenuef)</p> <p>The four sons of Horus were the protectors of the parts of the body of Osiris, and from this, became the protectors of the body of the deceased, and their heads often appeared on canopic jars.</p> <p>Duamutef – Jackal head; stomach; protected by the goddess Neith</p> <p>Hapi – Baboon head; lungs; protected by the goddess Nephthys</p> <p>Imsety – Man; liver; protected by the goddess Isis</p> <p>Qebehsenuef – Falcon head; intestines; protected by the goddess Selket</p>
	<p>Hathor</p> <p>An ancient goddess of Egypt, Hathor is a cow goddess. The name "Hathor" is the Greek corruption of the Egyptian names Het-Hert ("the House Above") or Het-Heru ("the House of Horus"). Both terms refer to her as a sky goddess, and the latter indicates she was a consort of Horus. In later times she is often connected with Isis. Hathor was usually shown with a solar disk flanked by cow horns on her head. At Thebes, she was considered a goddess of the dead, and wore the hieroglyph for "West" (ament) on her head. She was also the patron of love, joy, dance, alcohol, and foreign lands.</p>

	<p>Horus</p> <p>One of the most important deities of Egypt. As an ancient deity, Horus has many forms, myths, attributes and layers.</p> <p>Horus is the son of Osiris and Isis. Upon reaching adulthood, Horus avenges his father's death by defeating his evil uncle Seth. He then became the divine prototype of the Pharaoh.</p> <p>A falcon god, Horus is the god of the sky, god of war, and a god of protection. The sun is his right eye and the moon is his left. During his battle with Seth, his left eye was gouged out, and was therefore much weaker than the right – which explains why the moon is weaker than the sun.</p> <p>Horus is the patron deity of Upper (Southern) Egypt. A form of Horus is the solar disk flanked by a great pair of wings.</p>
	<p>Isis</p> <p>Isis is perhaps the most important goddess of Egyptian mythology. Although she has many attributes, her most important functions were those of motherhood, marital devotion, healing the sick, and the working of magical spells and charms. She was believed to be the most powerful magician in the universe, owing to the fact that she learned the Secret Name of Re from the god himself.</p> <p>Isis was the sister and wife of Osiris, sister of Seth and Nephthys. She was the mother of Horus and the protective goddess of Horus's son Imsety, who protected the deceased person's liver. Isis is a personification of light. Isis means "Throne" or "She of the Throne," and she is depicted with a throne on her head.</p>
	<p>Khepri</p> <p>The creator-god according to early Heliopolitan cosmology; assimilated with Re.</p> <p>Khepri is represented by the scarab or dung beetle (kheper), which rolled balls of dung across the ground, just as the sun rolled across the heavens. Khepri therefore became associated with the sun and is the form of Re at sunrise. The scarab also laid its eggs in the dung balls, so the beetle further became associated with rebirth, renewal and resurrection.</p>
	<p>Ma'at</p> <p>Ma'at is considered to be the wife of Thoth and the daughter of Re by various traditions. Ma'at means "truth," "justice" and even "cosmic order," but there is no clear English equivalent. She is an anthropomorphic personification of the concept of ma'at.</p> <p>Ma'at was represented as a woman with an ostrich feather (the glyph for her name) in her hair. She was present at the judgment of the dead; her feather was balanced against the heart of the deceased to determine whether he or she had led a pure and honest life.</p>
	<p>Nephthys</p> <p>Nephthys means "Lady of the House." She was the youngest child of Geb and Nut, the sister and wife of Seth, the sister of Isis and Osiris, and the mother of Anubis.</p> <p>Although the wife of Seth, Nephthys is a protector goddess, and she assisted Isis in the care of Horus and the resurrection of Osiris. She was considered, along with her sister Isis, the special protector of the dead, and she was the guardian of Hapi, the protector of the lungs.</p> <p>She is given the title "Friend of the Dead" and is seen as a personification of darkness (in a non-evil sense).</p>

	<p>Nut and Geb (pictured with Shu in the middle) Children of Shu (Air) and Tefnut (Moisture), and parents of Isis, Osiris, Nephthys and Seth.</p> <p>Nut – the goddess of the sky, Nut is generally depicted as a woman with blue skin and covered with stars. She stands on all fours, leaning over her husband, to represent the sky arched over the earth.</p> <p>Geb – the god of the earth, Geb is generally represented as a man with green or black skin (the color of living things and the color of the fertile Nile mud, respectively). Note that Geb is masculine, contrasting with many other religious traditions in which Earth is feminine.</p>
	<p>Osiris Osiris is the god of the dead and resurrection into eternal life. He is ruler, protector, and judge of the deceased. When in English someone might use the euphemism “the deceased” or “the late (name),” Egyptians referred to “the Osiris.” The cult of Osiris originated in Abydos, where his tomb was said to be located. Osiris was the first child of Nut and Geb, and the brother of Seth, Nephthys, and Isis, who was also his wife. With Isis, Osiris was the father of Horus. According to some stories, Nephthys assumed the form of Isis, seduced him, and from their union was born Anubis.</p> <p>Osiris ruled the world of men after Re had abandoned the world to rule the skies, but he was murdered by his brother Seth. Through the magic of Isis, he was resurrected. Being the first person to die, he subsequently became lord of the dead. His death was avenged by his son Horus, who defeated Seth and cast him out into the desert to the West of Egypt (the Sahara).</p> <p>Prayers and spells were addressed to Osiris throughout Egyptian history in hopes to secure his blessing and enter the afterlife that he ruled. His popularity steadily increased through the Middle Kingdom, and by Dynasty 18 he was probably the most widely worshipped god in Egypt.</p> <p>Osiris is represented as a mummified man with green skin, wearing the Atef crown (the White Crown of Upper Egypt with feathers added to each side), and carrying the crook and flail.</p>
	<p>Ptah Ptah is a creator god, along with Re and Amun. He was associated with the primordial mound, he called the world into being, and he created things just by speaking their names. Ptah invented the arts and became the god of craftsmen.</p> <p>Ptah was the local god of the capital Memphis. In the Ptolemaic Period, he was regarded as the Egyptian equivalent of the Greek Hephaestus.</p> <p>Ptah was depicted as a mummified man wearing a skullcap.</p>

	<p>Re (Ra)</p> <p>Re was the god of the sun during dynastic Egypt; the name is thought to have meant “creative power” and as a proper name “Creator.” In dynastic Egypt, Re’s cult center was Annu (Greek “Heliopolis,” near modern-day Cairo). In Dynasty 5, the king Userkaf added the term Sa-Re “Son of Re” to the titles of the pharaohs.</p> <p>Very early in Egyptian history, Re was identified with Horus, who as a hawk or falcon-god represented the loftiness of the skies. In some stories, Re was father of Shu and Tefnut. In later periods (about Dynasty 18 on) Osiris and Isis surpassed him in popularity, but he remained “Re, the Great God, Lord of Heaven” whether worshiped in his own right or, in later times, as one aspect of the Lord of the Universe, Amun-Re.</p> <p>Re is represented either as a hawk-headed man or as a hawk.</p>
	<p>Sekhmet</p> <p>A warrior goddess, Sekhmet is depicted as a lioness or a woman with the head of a lioness. The wife of Ptah, she was worshipped in Memphis. She was created by Re from the fire of his eyes as a creature of vengeance to punish mortals for their sins. A fierce goddess, her breath was said to have created the desert. She protected the pharaohs and led them in battle.</p> <p>Sekhmet is closely associated with Bastet, her gentle form, and Hathor.</p>
	<p>Selket</p> <p>A scorpion-goddess, Selket is shown as a beautiful woman with a scorpion on her head. Her scorpion struck death to the wicked, but Selket was petitioned to save the lives of innocent people stung by scorpions. She helped women in childbirth, bound up demons that would otherwise threaten Re, and sent seven of her scorpions to protect Isis from Seth. She also protects Qebehsenuef, the son of Horus who guarded the intestines of the deceased.</p>
	<p>Seth (or Set)</p> <p>Seth is the god of chaos, darkness, and evil. In earliest times, Seth was the patron deity of Lower (Northern) Egypt, and represented the fierce storms of the desert that the Lower Egyptians sought to appease. However, when Upper Egypt conquered Lower Egypt in the 1st Dynasty, Seth became known as the evil enemy of Horus (Upper Egypt’s dynastic god).</p> <p>Seth was the brother of Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys, and husband of the latter; according to some versions of the myths he is also father of Anubis. Seth is best known for murdering his brother Osiris and attempting to kill his nephew Horus; Horus, however, managed to survive and grew up to avenge his father’s death by establishing his rule over all Egypt, castrating Seth, and casting him out into the desert for all time.</p> <p>Seth is depicted with the body of a man and the head of the mysterious Seth animal, which had a curved snout and square ears. Pharaohs, gods and priests carry the <i>Was</i> scepter, which symbolizes the Seth animal.</p>
	<p>Shu</p> <p>Shu is the god of the atmosphere and of dry winds, son of Re, brother and husband of Tefnut, father of Geb and Nut. Represented in hieroglyphs by an ostrich feather (similar to Ma’at), which he is usually shown wearing on his head. He is usually shown standing on the recumbent Geb, holding up his daughter Nut, separating the two.</p> <p>Shu can also be a personification of the sun’s light. Shu and Tefnut were said to be two halves of one soul, perhaps the earliest recorded example of “soul mates.”</p>

	<p>Sobek</p> <p>The crocodile god Sobek was worshipped at the city of Arsinoë, which was also called Crocodilopolis by the Greeks. Sobek was depicted with the body of a man and the head of a crocodile. Crocodiles were feared creatures, and Sobek was worshipped to appease them.</p> <p>According to some evidence, Sobek was considered a fourfold deity who represented the four elemental gods (Re of fire, Shu of air, Geb of earth, and Osiris of water). In the <i>Book of the Dead</i>, Sobek assists in the birth of Horus; he fetches Isis and Nephthys to protect the deceased; and he aids in the destruction of Seth.</p>
	<p>Taweret</p> <p>Depicted as a hippopotamus with the arms and legs of a lion, the back and tail of a crocodile, a full pregnant abdomen, and pendulous breasts, Taweret was the “Great One.” Like Bes, Taweret was a deity that was worshipped in the home, and she was especially important for protecting women and their children. Taweret protected women throughout the pregnancy and then acted as a divine midwife when delivery came. Women would either wear an amulet in her shape or have a small statue of her likeness in their homes, and it was very common to also see Taweret on the headrests of beds and on cosmetic articles.</p>
	<p>Tefnut</p> <p>Tefnut is the goddess of moisture and clouds, daughter of Re, sister and wife of Shu, mother of Geb and Nut.</p> <p>She is depicted as a woman with the head of a lioness, which was her sacred animal. The name “Tefnut” probably derives from the root teftef, signifying “to spit, to moisten” and the root nu meaning “waters, sky.”</p>
	<p>Thoth</p> <p>The god of wisdom, Thoth was said to be self-created at the beginning of time along with his consort Ma’at (truth), or perhaps created by Re. It was said that Thoth produced eight children, of which the most important was Amun, “The Hidden One,” who was worshiped in Thebes as the Lord of the Universe.</p> <p>Thoth was depicted as a man with the head of an ibis, and he carried a pen and scrolls upon which he recorded all things. He was shown as attendant in almost all major scenes involving the gods, but especially at the judgment of the deceased. He served as the messenger of the gods, and was thus equated by the Greeks with Hermes.</p> <p>Thoth served in Osirian myths as the vizier (chief advisor and minister) of Osiris. He is a god of the moon, time, magic, and writing, since he was considered to be the inventor of the hieroglyphs.</p>

Dynastic Chronology

This chronology outlines the development of Egyptian civilization through its **eleven major periods**. Over the centuries, periods of strong central government, or kingdoms, generally alternate with intermediate eras of weaker central authority and reliance on local rule.

Prehistoric Period

Neolithic Period; Omari Culture, Maadi Culture

circa 5000–4400 B.C.E.

People lived primarily in farming settlements. Nearly nothing is known of the political system.

Predynastic Period

Badarian Period, Naqada Periods I-III, and Dynasty 0

circa 4400–3000 B.C.E.

The Predynastic Period reveals traits that anticipate classical Egyptian culture and customs. We see the earliest villages in Egypt in prehistoric times, and they stretch to the very beginnings of recorded history in Dynasty 0 about 1,400 years later. Archaeological evidence indicates the beginnings of international trade with the Near East and Nubia and the first writing in Dynasty 0.

Early Dynastic Period

Dynasties 1 and 2

circa 3000–2675 B.C.E.

The Early Dynastic Period witnessed the first centralized government in Egypt. Upper and Lower Egypt (Southern and Northern Egypt) were unified during the First and Second Dynasties under **King Narmer/Menes**. Monumental architecture appeared in tombs, and the national capital was at **Memphis**.

Old Kingdom

Dynasties 3 through 6

circa 2675–2130 B.C.E.

The next period, the Old Kingdom, is often called the Pyramid Age and produced the best-known monuments of ancient Egypt. The Old Kingdom witnessed the centralization of political power in Memphis, the national capital. **King Djoser** completed construction of history's first stone buildings, at Saqqara. The peak of this centralized power came in the reigns of **Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure**, Fourth Dynasty kings who built their **Pyramids at Giza**. Fifth and Sixth Dynasty kings allowed power to devolve gradually to the provinces, resulting in a new period of localized political control. Centralized government began to dissolve at the end of this period.

First Intermediate Period

Dynasty 7 through first half of Dynasty 11

circa 2170–2008 B.C.E.

The First Intermediate Period was a transitional era that existed “between kingdoms,” and was marked by local rule. Disorder, social and political decline and dissolution are key factors of this unsettled time. A breakdown of centralized government occurs, with many kings having overlapping reigns. This was finally brought under control by a strong line of Theban princes, and the reunification of Egypt by Mentuhotep II. This time included the last years of the

Memphis royal house and the rise of rival kings of the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties in **Herakleopolis**, southwest of modern Cairo, and of the Eleventh Dynasty in **Thebes**. Local control was stronger than central government influence.

Middle Kingdom

Latter half of Dynasty 11 through Dynasty 13

circa 2008–after 1630 B.C.E.

The Middle Kingdom was a period of high achievement in the arts, architecture, and letters. A time of foreign trade and enormous building projects, the Middle Kingdom marked a long, successful, and prosperous period. Elegant and sophisticated craftsmanship, and a feeling of a “renaissance” was present. In the Eleventh Dynasty, political power remained in Thebes, the home of the ruling dynasty. In the Twelfth Dynasty, the seat of power shifted northward to **Lisht**, located southwest of modern Cairo. The Twelfth Dynasty was the apex of centralized power in the Middle Kingdom. The Thirteenth Dynasty witnessed the gradual infiltration of West Semitic-speaking peoples into the eastern **Nile Delta** and increased local control.

Second Intermediate Period

Dynasties 14 through 17

1630–1539/1523 B.C.E.

A second gradual breakdown of central government led to the Second Intermediate Period, which was dominated by the Hyksos, West Semitic-speaking foreigners ruling in the north of Egypt while local princes of Thebes controlled the south. Many of these dynasties overlap with each other in time.

New Kingdom

Dynasties 18 through 20

circa 1539–1075 B.C.E.

The New Kingdom is probably the best known period of Egyptian antiquity. It was a successful and prosperous time, with resurgence in art and monumental building projects. Egypt began to look outward with the beginning of the New Kingdom, when a strong, wealthy central government held sway over the ancient northeast African and Near Eastern world. Theban princes reasserted control over Egypt, founding the Eighteenth Dynasty. Further expansion of Egyptian borders also occurred southward in Africa into modern-day **Sudan**. Kings grew rich and patronized vast architectural and artistic projects.

For seventeen years near the end of the eighteenth dynasty, a religious revolutionary and king named **Amenhotep IV** or **Akhenaten**, together with his wife **Nefertiti**, worshipped only the sun disk, which they called the **Aten**. This was in direct conflict with the multi-deity system Egyptians had come to know. This brief time span is called the **Amarna Period**.

After restoration of religious traditions, the Eighteenth Dynasty family was replaced by the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasty family of kings called **Ramesses**. These kings maintained foreign possessions until the invasion of foreigners known as Sea Peoples. Unfortunately by the end of the Nineteenth Dynasty, the increasing power of the priesthood corrupted the central government. The Twentieth Dynasty saw many tombs robbed by officials, and the priesthood became hereditary and assumed secular power. The government finally breaks down.

Third Intermediate Period

Dynasties 21 through 25

circa 1075–656 B.C.E.

This period witnessed overlapping local dynasties and kings of foreign origin from both **Libya** and **Nubia**. The arts flourished.

Late Period

Dynasties 26 through 31

664–332 B.C.E.

The centralized government led by Libyans introduced the Late Period, when foreign rule by **Persians** added to the rich mix of people living in Egypt. Libyans and Persians alternated rule with native Egyptians, but traditional Egyptian conventions continued in the arts.

Ptolemaic Period

Macedonian and Ptolemaic Dynasties

332–30 B.C.E.

Alexander the Great's invasion resulted in the Ptolemaic Period, which saw the blending of Egyptian and Greek culture. Alexander conquered Egypt in 332 BCE, and following his death, his general **Ptolemy** established a family dynasty that ruled until the death of **Cleopatra VII** after the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. Egypt maintained a dual culture encompassing both native Egyptian and Greek elements.

Roman and Byzantine Periods

30 B.C.E.–642 C.E.

During the early years of Roman rule the country was directly administered as the property of the emperor. In the fourth century CE, the Roman Empire split into two halves and Egypt was part of the **Eastern Roman Empire**, ruled from Byzantium (modern Istanbul). Egyptians increasingly converted to Christianity and created art that reflected the influence of the new religion.

Islamic Period

642 C.E. to Present

Muslim Arabs conquered Egypt in 642 CE, defeating the Byzantine armies. Traditional Egyptian beliefs, Coptic Christian beliefs and Muslim beliefs existed together. Slowly, the traditional beliefs began to fade and Muslim religion expanded. Ancient Egyptian language continued through the Coptic Church.

Muslim rulers nominated by the Islamic Caliphate held control until the **Ottoman Turks** conquered Egypt in 1517, after which time it became a province of the Ottoman Empire.

Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt in 1798, fighting the Ottoman and Mamluk forces.

A commander of an Albanian force, **Muhammad Ali Pasha**, became a dominate figure and established a dynasty that ruled Egypt until the revolution in 1952.

Glossary

Writing/Language/Texts:

Book of the Dead: The name given by early Egyptologists to a collection of religious spells which were thought to be helpful to the deceased in the afterlife. The Book of the Dead was mostly written on papyri but extracts from it also appear on tomb walls and various funerary items such as sarcophagi, coffins, shabties, headrests and scarabs.

Imi-duat: Literally the book of "That which is in the Underworld," one of the compilations of religious texts often found on the walls of New Kingdom royal tombs, but which also appears on papyri. The Imi-duat describes in detail various parts of the underworld and its inhabitants who are encountered by the sun god Re in his nightly journey.

Cartouche: The name given by the scholars to an ornamental, but also symbolic, frame used to surround the two most important names of Egyptian kings. The oval or round frame, which originally took the form of a rope enclosing the name, probably indicated that the king was placed under the protection of the sun god Re. Cartouches were also used to indicate the names of other members of the royal family and also some deities.

Hieroglyphs: The signs of the Egyptian writing system always remained recognizable pictures of people, animals and objects (although Egyptian script was not true picture writing). Some seven hundred signs were commonly used but many more existed.

Scribe: Non-noble upper rank of Egyptian society, generally a learned man fluent in reading and writing the ancient Egyptian language.

Vizier: A word used to describe a chief official of the Egyptian state who had supreme executive control over all aspects of administration. The vizier was directly responsible to the king.

Objects and Materials:

Canopic jars: Vessels in which the internal organs of the deceased were placed after being removed in the mummification process. Canopic jars were made of alabaster or limestone and were distinguished by different lids. They were placed in the burial chamber next to the coffin.

Cartonnage: Material consisting mainly of linen or papyrus stiffened with plaster. It was used in the manufacture of anthropoid coffins and other funerary objects. In Egyptological terminology, the word 'cartonnage' is often used to mean an anthropoid coffin made of cartonnage.

Electrum: An alloy of gold and silver.

Faience: A material, usually with a glassy blue or green surface, manufactured by heating powdered quartz with ingredients such as natron (a naturally occurring compound of sodium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate).

False Door: A non-functioning stone sculpture of a door into a tomb, found either inside the chapel or on the outside of the mastaba. It served as a place to make offerings and recite prayers for the deceased.

Mummification: A process to preserve the body of the deceased person by artificial means. Mummification was basically dehydration and desiccation achieved by means of the naturally occurring dehydrating substance natron (a mixture of sodium salts). Mummification involved the removal of most of the internal organs and sometimes also the brain, but not the heart, which was the place where Egyptians believed all thoughts and emotions resided.

Palette: A flat slab of stone used for the grinding of eye paint. Some palettes became highly decorative and lost their original, purely practical purpose and were turned into votive objects to be donated to a temple god.

Sarcophagus: A stone container for the body of the deceased person, either rectangular or anthropoid. The sarcophagus consists of two parts, the case and the lid.

Scarab (Khepri): The dung beetle was thought to be connected with the sun god because its habit of rolling a ball of dung across the ground was reminiscent of the journey of the sun across the sky. The literal translation is “one who becomes.” Khepri was also the name of the sun god Re at sunrise, when he came into being on the eastern horizon each morning.

Shabty: A small statuette, usually representing the deceased person as a mummiform figure holding agricultural implements. These statuettes were expected to answer the call to work in the underworld. Shabties were made of stone, wood, faience or even bronze, and were inscribed with one of the spells from the Book of the Dead.

Stela (Stele): A flat slab of stone, a gravestone.

Parts of the Individual:

Ka: One of the elements of each person (but also of the gods) was their ka, often translated as ‘spirit,’ but better rendered as ‘life force’ or creative and sustaining power of life. The ka was essential for the person’s existence on earth as well as in the afterlife because it animated the body. The body had to be preserved if the person was to continue to exist after death. This idea gave rise to mummification and sculpture (providing the ka with a substitute body).

Heart: The heart controlled both thought and emotion and had an independent existence after death, stemming from its knowledge of an individual’s activities and thoughts during life on earth. The heart was actually weighed and judged according to Ma’at, determining the individual’s fate in the afterworld.

Ba: The Ba of an individual was usually depicted as a human-headed bird and represented the person’s personality or soul.

Ren: The Ren, or individual’s name, controlled an individual’s fate either through its use in magic or through the protection of the god invoked in the name.

Shadow: The shadow of an individual was considered to be a physical part of an individual on earth, and therefore needed to be integrated into the whole person in the underworld.

Akh: Akh, literally translated, means “effective spirit.” It represented the unified manifestation of all five parts of an individual and integral to the continuation of the individual in the afterlife. This entity could move about the universe as needed.

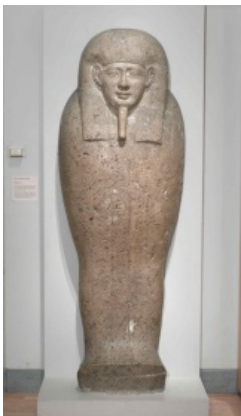
Exhibition Themes and Key Images

To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum

All ancient Egyptians desired to live after death. *To Live Forever: Egyptian Treasures from the Brooklyn Museum* illustrates the Egyptian funerary beliefs and customs that were observed for nearly four thousand years by both the rich and the poor. This exhibition answers questions often asked about the afterlife, mummies, funerals, and tombs, as it illustrates the variety of strategies used to evade death and, ultimately, to live forever.

After surveying Egyptian beliefs through papyri and works of art, this exhibition addresses many of the practical considerations an ancient Egyptian faced when preparing for burial. Not everyone had access to the elaborate funeral equipment made for kings. *To Live Forever* therefore illustrates how middle-class artisans and some poorer people made use of cheaper materials and secondhand items in providing for their tombs. In place of vast wealth, they substituted their own creativity to reach the afterlife. Objects belonging to the middle and poorer classes are shown near the luxurious goods used by the rich to guarantee their eternal lives, often in side-by-side comparisons.

Sarcophagi



Sarcophagus Lid of Pa-di-Djehuti. From cemetery at el-Tarmakiya, near Hardai (Kynopolis), Egypt. Ptolemaic Period, ca. 305–30 BCE. Limestone, 80 5/6 x 22 13/16 x 13 3/8 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 34.1221

This large stone sarcophagus lid was made for a wealthy royal scribe and priest named Pa-di-Inpu and his son Pa-di-Djehuty. It is an example of the expensive tomb equipment we expect for all Egyptians. Yet only a limited group of people could afford burial in such an elaborate stone coffin. Members of less-wealthy families made coffins from low-quality wood or even terracotta.

Beliefs About the Afterlife

Osiris and Rebirth

Ancient Egyptian understanding of the afterlife is reflected in the story of the god Osiris. The story also explains why certain objects were desired in an Egyptian tomb.

Osiris and his wife, Isis, were Egypt's beloved first rulers. Osiris's jealous brother, Seth, invited the king to a party only to trap him in a special human-form box—like a coffin—created exactly in Osiris's dimensions. Seth and his co-conspirators threw the box into the Nile, Osiris drowned, and then Seth claimed the throne. Isis retrieved Osiris's body and magically revived him long enough so that they could conceive a child. She also built temples for him where he could receive food offerings after death, thereby establishing the precursor of the tomb.

Osiris became king of the afterlife while Isis raised their son, Horus. Horus later defeated his uncle Seth and became king of Egypt. But at their death, all Egyptians still wanted to imitate Horus's father, Osiris, by being reborn into the afterlife. Many of the objects in an Egyptian tomb were intended to help the deceased achieve this goal.

The Voyage of the God Re

Egyptians believed that the sun god Re traveled in a boat across the sky from east to west in the world of the living. Reaching the west, he entered the afterlife and then traveled across the sky of the underworld going eastward. Each hour that the god traveled in the underworld he was attacked by Apophis, a dragon-like demon. Only during the fifth hour of his journey was Re safe in the realm of Osiris. At the end of the twelfth hour of his underworld journey, Re was reborn into the eastern horizon of our world. Many of the decorations in royal tombs and on papyrus documents reveal that Egyptians also desired to travel with Re in his boat after death.

The stories about Re and about Osiris, plus a series of magic spells that protected the deceased from danger, provided the knowledge an ancient Egyptian needed to enter, and thrive in, the afterlife.



Mummiform Figure of Osiris. From Egypt. Probably Late Period, 664–332 BCE. Painted wood, 24 13/16 x 4 13/16 x 11 1/8 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.1481E

The inscription identifies this figure as Osiris. He wears the crown of ostrich feathers, a sun-disk, and the ram's horns that identify him as a king. Yet he is also in the form of a mummy with the curled beard worn by the dead. The figure stands on a hollow base. Originally, a papyrus with a spell written on it was stored in the base. When this figure and papyrus were placed in the tomb, the deceased enjoyed the protection of Osiris and of the spell.




Anthropoid Coffin of the Servant of the Great Place, Teti (detail). From Thebes, Egypt. New Kingdom, mid- to late Dynasty 18, ca. 1339–1307 BCE. Painted wood, 33 7/16 x 26 3/16 x 83 1/2 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.14E

All Egyptians after the New Kingdom desired a coffin representing them as Osiris. Although the coffin stands for the box that Seth used to trap Osiris, in the tomb the coffin protects the person who will become Osiris. This coffin was made for Teti, a "Servant of the Great Place." This title was used by artisans who painted tombs in the Valley of the Kings and lived in Deir el-Medina. As a middle-class artisan, he paid nearly a year's salary for a coffin of this quality. He was able to use five different paint colors to decorate his wooden coffin, including blue, yellow, red, black, and white. He paid separately for each paint color. The yellow background paint with red streaks is used to imitate the gilded coffins of the wealthy.

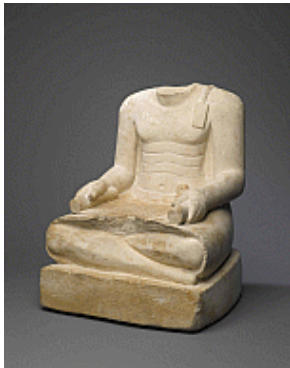


Gaming Board Inscribed for Amenhotep III with Separate Sliding Drawer and a Set of Thirteen Gaming Pieces. From Egypt. New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, reign of Amenhotep III, ca. 1390–1353 BCE. Glazed faience, gaming board: 2 3/16 x 3 1/16 x 8 1/4 in.; eight reel-shaped gaming pieces, each 1/2 in. high x 13/16 in. diameter; five cone-shaped gaming pieces, each 1 in. high x 11/16 in. diameter. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 49.56a–b (board), 49.57.1–13 (pieces)

	<p>(<i>Gaming Board</i> continued)</p> <p>This board and these gaming pieces were used to play the game the Egyptians called senet, or “passing.” Two players each used seven gaming pieces to advance according to the roll of stick-like dice, jump over the other player’s pieces, and finally remove all pieces from the board. The first player to remove all pieces won rebirth into the afterlife. This game was played for over three thousand years in Egypt, and its board and pieces were often included in the tomb.</p>
	<p><i>Seated Statue of the Superintendent of the Granary Irukaptah.</i> From Saqqara, Egypt. Old Kingdom, late Dynasty 5, ca. 2425–2350 BCE. Limestone, 29 3/4 x 11 x 16 9/16 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.20E</p> <p>This statue functioned as a place for Irukaptah to receive offerings from this world to convey to the next world. The Egyptian’s believed that the ka-soul could inhabit a statue like this. Scenes of offering carved on the sides of this chair show men offering fowl, linen, and food in containers. On the back, two women offer objects in a chest and perhaps bread. These scenes substitute for or augment scenes of offerings that were carved on the walls of the tomb.</p>

The Non-Royal Elite

The non-royal elite included people who were literate and worked as high officials in the government bureaucracy or in the temples as priests. This group could afford tombs and all their contents rather than simpler burials in graves dug into the desert sand, which was the fate of poorer Egyptians. The elite either built stone tombs as small, freestanding buildings or excavated tombs in the side of a mountain. But even within this group, there were varying degrees of wealth. When they commissioned statues for their tombs, they often had to make choices between more or less expensive materials in order to make the most of their resources. Limestone is soft and easier to carve than black granite or granodiorite. Limestone is also relatively plentiful in Egypt while black granite and granodiorite are less common and therefore more expensive. The statues in this section demonstrate some of the choices wealthier Egyptians made in statuary.

	<p><i>Headless Statue of the Scribe Djehuti.</i> Thebes, Egypt. New Kingdom, early Dynasty 18, ca. 1539–1390 BCE. Limestone, 18 x 13 x 14 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.30E</p> <p>Nearly all members of the non-royal elite were able both to read and write hieroglyphs and the cursive form of writing called hieratic. Men in this group often commissioned statues of themselves in the act of reading or writing. Here, Djehuti appears to be reading a prayer, which perhaps he has just finished writing. The hieroglyphs are arranged so that the statue can “see” them right side up.</p>
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The Mummy and The Funeral

The Mummy

The Egyptians believed that the human body must be preserved in order to ensure eternal life. The Greek historian Herodotus, who visited Egypt in the fifth century BCE, described three different mummification processes that were available depending on the deceased's budget.

The most expensive process involved the surgical removal of the brain and internal organs. Embalmers then used natron, a naturally occurring salt, to dehydrate the body over the course of seventy days. Next, priests poured an expensive combination of imported and domestic resins into the body to preserve it. The preservative ingredients that modern scientists have identified in mummies ensured that the body was both waterproof and resisted damage caused by microorganisms and insects; the Egyptians connected the efficacy of these ingredients with their religious beliefs. The body was then wrapped in linen and placed in a coffin, now ready for the funeral service.

A less expensive method of mummification substituted an abdominal injection of cedar resin for the surgical process. This resin liquefied the internal organs, which were drained through the rectum. Dehydration with natron followed, along with wrapping in linen.

Finally, in the cheapest method of mummification, an enema allowed embalmers to remove the internal organs through the rectum. Herodotus gave no further details about this method.

The Funeral

Only elite funerals are well-enough documented that modern scholars can reconstruct them. However, objects found in poorer people's graves suggest that all Egyptians shared the goals of the better-known funerals: to make the journey to the afterlife and live there for eternity. The Egyptian funeral was a series of rituals that equated the deceased with the god Osiris, the prototype of a being who died, was revived, and then reborn into the afterlife. The rituals included dance, music, animal sacrifice, recitation, and ritualized mourning along a route that led from the embalming house to the tomb. The final ritual performed at the tomb itself was the "Opening of the Mouth," which activated the mummy, allowing it to be part of the ongoing rituals, just before placing it the tomb.



Mummy and Portrait of Demetrios. From Hawara, Egypt. Roman Period, 50–100 CE. Painted cloth, gold, human remains, and encaustic on wood panel, a: 13 3/8 x 15 3/8 x 74 13/16 in.; b (portrait): 14 11/16 x 8 1/16 x 1/16 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 11.600 a–b

When the Romans ruled Egypt (30 B.C.E.–642 C.E.), some wealthy Greeks there were mummified. This mummy was made with expensive imported materials. It is wrapped in a red linen shroud over the mummy bandages. The red pigment used to paint the shroud was made with lead imported from Spain. The mummy includes a Roman-style portrait of Demetrios painted on a wooden panel in the medium of encaustic, or wax plus pigment. (Compare it to the less costly portrait painted directly on Neferhotep's shroud, also shown in this section of the exhibition.) Artists added Egyptian divine symbols to Demetrios's mummy shroud and the deceased's name and age at death, recorded as fifty-nine years, all in gold leaf. The materials used in this process show the wealth Demetrios commanded in life.

A recent CT scan of this mummy reveals that the individual suffered from gallstones during his life.



Canopic Jar and Lid (Depicting a Jackal). From Egypt. Late Period, Dynasty 26 or later, 664–525 BCE or later. Limestone, 11 9/16 in. high x 5 1/4 in. diameter. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.894Ea–b

Canopic jars first appeared in the tomb of Hetepheres, the mother of Khufu, builder of the Great Pyramid. They were intended to hold the separately mummified internal organs. The middle-class examples of canopic jars, which first appeared seven hundred years later, are often dummies like these, never hollowed out to hold the organs, but still included in the tomb. Canopic jars demonstrate the development of a custom at a royal cemetery that was then adopted in a cheaper form by the middle class.



Elaborately Painted Shroud of Neferhotep, Son of Herrotiou. From Deir el-Medina, Egypt. Roman Period, 100–225 CE. Painted linen, 30 x 67 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 75.114

Neferhotep's shroud bears a Roman-style portrait, similar to the panel portrait found on Demetrios's mummy. Neferhotep thus avoided the cost of the wooden panel that Demetrios used, instead instructing the artists to paint directly on the shroud. In addition, Neferhotep's artists used less-expensive tempera rather than the encaustic paint found in Demetrios's portrait.

When Neferhotep's shroud was excavated by Bernard Bruyère in 1948, parts of it were missing. The ultraviolet photograph reproduced here indicates darker areas of restoration done about 1970. The shroud entered the Brooklyn Museum's collection in 1975.

Substitute, Imitate, Combine, Reuse

Furnishing a tomb was the greatest expense in an ancient Egyptian's life. For an artisan, the coffin alone could cost more than one year's salary. At least four strategies were available to those planning to furnish a tomb on a budget: they could substitute, imitate, combine, or reuse. Very often, evidence of more than one of these strategies is often visible in the same object.

Substitution involved choosing a cheaper material instead of a precious one that an elite owner would use. Substitutions included the use of faience, which is made mostly from sand, in place of gold or a hard, rare stone. Terracotta could also substitute for stone. In such cases, there were no attempts to disguise the substitution.

Imitation meant decorating one material to look like something more expensive. Thus, a terracotta jar could be painted to imitate a more costly granite vessel. In a similar way, a terracotta mummy mask could be painted yellow to imitate gold. In one case, a white limestone statue base was painted black to imitate schist, a hard, black stone, and was then used to support a recycled schist statue.

Combining could be followed in the case of coffin sets. With expensive coffins, there was both a separate lid and, inside the coffin, a mummy board—a board shaped into a life-size figure of the deceased wearing everyday clothing, which was placed directly on the mummy. But to save money, the typical mummy board decoration could be used on the lid, thereby combining the two.

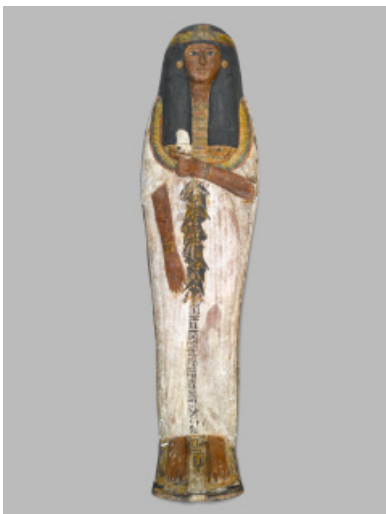
Finally, reuse included removing the name of a previous owner and reinscribing an object for a new user. A government program of recycling tomb objects is known from the end of the New Kingdom, around 1070 BCE. Coffins, statues, and *shabties*, the figurines that magically acted as workers in the next world, could all be reused.

Often these four techniques were used together. These methods of economizing reveal tremendous creativity among those who did not have the means to furnish a tomb according to elite standards.



Mummy Mask of a Man. From Egypt, Roman Period, early 1st century CE. Gilded and painted stucco, 20 1/4 x 13 x 7 7/8 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 72.57

The wealthy could afford gilded mummy masks, while poorer people modeled mummy masks from clay. The gilded mask shown here is protected by the winged scarab on his head, symbol of rebirth into the next world. Images of the deceased's mummy before Osiris on the lappets of his head covering suggest a positive judgment on his entrance to the afterlife. The clay mask is painted yellow to imitate gold, while the eyes are painted white with blue outlines to imitate inlay.



Coffin of the Lady of the House, Weretwahset, Reinscribed for Bensusipet, Containing Face Mask and Openwork Body Covering. From Deir el-medina, Egypt. New Kingdom, early Dynasty 19, ca. 1292–1190 BCE. Painted wood (fragments a, b); Cartonnage and wood (fragment c); cartonnage (fragment d), 25 3/8 x 19 11/16 x 76 3/16 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.47Ea–b

In this coffin set, Weretwahset combined the lid with the usually separate piece called the mummy board. A coffin lid is generally decorated to present the deceased as Osiris. Here, instead, the deceased wears a dress she would have worn in life—an image that more often formed the decoration for the mummy board, which would have rested inside the coffin and on top of the mummy. Bensusipet erased Weretwahset's name from the coffin and added her own, about two hundred years after Weretwahset died. Bensusipet also added the mask and body cover, perhaps from another coffin set.

The Meaning of Amulets

Amulets were worn in life or attached to a mummy after death as a means of protection. They could be made of gold or precious stones for the elite or from simple faience for less wealthy Egyptians. The following kinds of amulets are found in this exhibition:

Ba Amulets: These amulets were placed on the chest of the mummy. They ensured the return of the ba-soul, which could travel from the tomb to this world and to the afterlife. Though the mummy was the ba's home, *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 89, suggests that Egyptians feared it would not always return. They might also have believed that this amulet could act as a substitute if the true ba refused to return to the mummy. These amulets are known to have been made out of precious materials, including lapis lazuli, as well as cheaper ones such as faience and glass.

Bes Amulets: These amulets were worn suspended from a chain around the neck. Bes was the deity who protected women in childbirth and children both during life and in the tomb. He had a lion's face and tail, a dwarf's legs, and wore plumes on his head. Bes aided rebirth into the next life just as he aided birth into this world. Bes amulets were made of many different materials, but the most prized were made of gold.

Wadjet or Eye Amulets: The wadjet-eye is found in greater numbers than any other amulet. It represents the eye of the god Horus, which the ancient Egyptians believed was the moon. Just as the moon waxes and wanes, the eye of Horus can be injured but also heals. The amulet can be made of almost all the materials known to the Egyptians. These examples show the range from the most expensive (gold) to the least expensive (faience).

Djed Amulets: These amulets are in the shape of the hieroglyph that means "enduring." The symbol probably originally represented a tree trunk that was lifted during a ceremony reenacting Osiris's resurrection. *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 155, refers to the djed as the backbone of Osiris, which allows him to rise up once again in the afterlife.

Heart Scarabs: See below.

Hollow Cylindrical Amulets: Amulets like this were suspended from a cord and worn around the neck. They contained a piece of papyrus with a written spell that offered protection to women and children. They are known only from the Middle and New Kingdoms and belonged to royalty and high-ranking members of society.

Nefertum Amulets: Nefertum wears a royal kilt and, on his head, a lotus with two tall feathers, and he stands on a resting lion, his sacred animal. Nefertum was the son of the great gods of Memphis, Ptah, and Sekhmet. These three gods form an alternative divine family parallel to Osiris, Isis, and Horus. Like amulets of Horus, amulets of Nefertum were worn to protect a young person in this life and in the next.

Tyt Amulets: According to *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 156, a red jasper tyt amulet was to be placed on the neck of the mummy. The amulet, which was shaped like the belt of the goddess Isis, guaranteed that the mummy would receive her protection.



Heart Scarab. From Saqqara, Egypt. Late Period, Dynasty 26, 664–525 BCE. Steatite and sheet gold, 7/8 x 1 7/16 x 2 1/16 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.717E

A heart scarab is a specialized amulet in the form of a dung beetle. When these beetles pushed small pellets of dung, it reminded Egyptians of one way they thought the sun traveled across the sky. A heart scarab was placed over the mummy's heart. The scarab was inscribed with *The Book of the Dead*, Spell 30B, which implores the heart not to testify against the deceased at the judgment of the dead. The heart was weighed during the judgment to prove it had the same weight as "truth." The heart scarab guaranteed the success of this operation.

The Tomb

The ancient Egyptians constructed the tomb as a home for the mummy and as an aid to the deceased's rebirth into the afterlife. In addition to the individual's mummified remains, the tomb contained objects from the deceased's life on earth for use in the next life. These objects included such gender-specific items as weapons, for men, and cosmetic containers, mirrors, and grooming accessories for women. Other objects in the tomb, such as coffins, *shabties*, and statues, were exclusively for the next world.

Tombs were also the means for conveying food from this world to the afterlife. This was achieved by making offerings of actual food to statues, or by offering representations of food, drink, clothing, and other necessities in tomb wall images. Tombs contained a variety of vessels for food and drink provided to the deceased.



Shabty of Nesi-Ta-nebet-Isheru, Daughter of Pinedjem II. From Deir el-Bahri, Egypt. Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 21, ca. 1075–945 BCE. Glazed faience, 5 13/16 x 2 1/4 x 1 1/2 in. Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Evangeline Wilbour Blashfield, Theodora Wilbour, and Victor Wilbour honoring the wishes of their mother, Charlotte Beebe Wilbour, as a memorial to their father, Charles Edwin Wilbour, 16.183

Shabties were included in tombs to perform agricultural work in place of the deceased in the afterlife. Many of them are inscribed with Chapter 6 of *The Book of the Dead*, which says they will dig irrigation ditches, cultivate crops, and carry sand. Others only bear the name and title of the owner. The earlier examples included here are inscribed in ink while in the later examples the text is part of the mold, which clearly saved labor. *Shabties* and scarabs, beetle-shaped amulets associated with rebirth and the sun god, are the most common Egyptian antiquities to survive to modern times.



Large Outer Sarcophagus of the Royal Prince, Count of Thebes, Pa-seba-khai-en-ipet. From Thebes, near Deir el-Bahri, Egypt. Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 21, ca. 1075–945 BCE. Gessoed and painted wood, 37 x 30 1/4 x 83 3/8 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 08.480.1a–b

In the Twenty-first Dynasty, the Egyptian elites stopped building elaborate tombs. Instead, they transferred the scenes normally painted on tomb walls to the coffin. Pa-seba-khai-en-ipet's outer coffin shows multiple scenes of the gods and the deceased worshipping them. Not only does the coffin present the deceased as Osiris, but it also illustrates the many gods he will confront in the afterlife.

The damage to the painted surface on the left side of the coffin has been left unrepaired to reveal how the carpenters pinned smaller pieces of wood together with wooden pegs to make a coffin. Artists then plastered and painted the surface to make it appear smooth.



Upper Part of a False Door of Sethew. From Giza, Egypt. Old Kingdom, Dynasty 5, ca. 2500–2350 BCE. Painted limestone, 22 1/16 x 20 1/2 x 4 15/16 in. Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund, 37.34E

False doors in the tomb led to the afterlife. They were a suitable place for offerings. Sethew, a very high palace official, here sits before an offering table stacked with loaves of bread in the shape of the hieroglyph for the word “field,” the source of food for offerings. The surrounding inscription promises him very large quantities of food, beverages, clothing, cosmetics, and ritual oils needed in the afterlife.

Inscriptions on Funerary Objects: The Standard Offering Formula

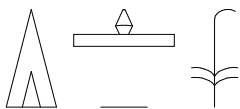
The standard offering formula is the most common of all the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the objects found in *To Live Forever*. The formula is composed in Middle Egyptian, the spoken dialect in Egypt from about 2000 BCE to the mid-sixteenth century BCE, but was also used as the standard written language as late as the Roman Period, when the last known inscription was composed in 395 CE.

The English translation of the standard offering formula is:

An offering which the king and Osiris give: may he give a voice offering consisting of bread, beer, oxen, fowl, linen, and ointment to the soul of [DECEASED’S NAME].

Additional offerings could be included specifying kinds of bread, or adding wine, and many other possibilities. Sometimes, specific numbers of offerings were stated, but often the expression “thousands of” was used to describe the number of offerings given. Additionally, the name of a local god could often be substituted for Osiris, the god of the land of the dead.

The formula begins with four hieroglyphic signs:



These signs read *hetep di nesu*, or “a gift which the king gives.” They can be arranged from right to left, left to right, or top to bottom, depending on the layout of the inscription. Readers could determine the beginning of the inscription because the animal and human signs faced toward the starting point. The repetition of these four signs makes it easy to recognize the standard offering formula.

The following is the inscription on the nearby *Statue of Ipepi*

A) *An offering which the king, Sobek of Shedet, and Horus who is in Shedet give: may he give 1,000 of bread, beer, cattle, fowl, and ointments for the soul (ka) of Ipepi, engendered by Kyku.*

B) *1,000 bread, beer, beef, fowl, ointment, linen, divine offerings of bread and beer.*

C) *As for anyone who will see this statue, may you say (the prayer called), “An offering which the king gives” for the Major-domo, Ipepi, engendered by Kyku, justified [i.e., successfully entered into the afterlife]. If you love your local gods, may you give the contents of your vessels and the liquid of your jugs, saying over them “for the soul (ka) of Ipepi, justified.”*

D) *An offering which the king, Sobek of Shedet, and Horus who is in Shedet give: may he give a voice offering [i.e., say the prayer out loud] of bread, beer, cattle, fowl, ointment, linen, every good, pure thing on which a god lives for the soul (ka) of the Major-domo, Ipepi, engendered by Kyku.*